

In re Appl. No. 09/543,782

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Blood or other body fluid is screened for infection of an individual with HTLV-I and/or HTLV-II by subjecting each sample from the individual to a test for the presence of the Tax protein, DNA which encodes the Tax protein, or antibodies specific to the Tax protein, and correlating the presence of HTLV-I and/or HTLV-II infection with the result of the test. This test can also be used to screen pregnant women and nursing mothers for HTLV-I/II infection, or to screen seronegative patients who otherwise present symptoms of HTLV-I/II infection for HTLV-I/II infection. Because this test, which relies on testing for the presence of the tax protein is so specific for HTLV-I and/or HTLV-II infection, there is no requirement for input from any other test result to test positively for HTLV-I and/or HTLV-II.